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THE

THE

Lord Bishop of *SALISBURY*'s

CHARGE, &c.

In the YEAR MDCCXXVI.

THE

Price Six-Pence.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHANCERY

IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO

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A  
C H A R G E

Deliver'd to the

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A T T H E

P R I M A R Y V I S I T A T I O N

O F T H E

D I O C E S E of *S A R U M*,

In the Y E A R, M D C C X X V I.

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1676-1761  
✓*Goodly.*  
By BEN JAMIN, *Lord Bishop of the*  
*said D I O C E S E.*

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L O N D O N:

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CHARGE

OF THE

PROSECUTION

AGAINST

BY THE





A  
C H A R G E  
Deliver'd to the  
C L E R G Y, &c.



YOU know, MY BRETHREN, that the *Relation*, I now bear to You, makes it my Duty, upon the present Occasion, to say something to You. And, as this is the first time of our coming together for that Purpose: I think, I cannot better employ it, than by calling to your Minds, and my own, some of the most Important and *General Points*, which are of equal Concern to You and Me; and of the greatest Weight to Us all in the Discharge of our several Duties. And, for this good End, nothing appears to me to be more proper than

- I. To consider our selves, not only as *Christians*, but as, *Ministers* of *Christ*; and as having particularly devoted our selves to the Service of God, and of the Souls of Men, in the *Christian Church*.
- II. To consider our selves as *Protestants*; and as *Ministers* in a *Protestant Church*. And
- III. To consider our selves as *Ministers* in the *Church of England*, peculiarly so called, as it is at present Establish'd amongst Us.

THE Division of our Thoughts under these *Three Heads* will be of great Use to Us: as it will lead Us more distinctly to consider the several *Adversaries* We have to deal with, and the true Line and Measure of our Duty with respect to *Them*; as well as the Weight of our Office, and Our great Concern in the due Performance of it.

I. THE *first* and great Point, is, often to consider that We are not only *Christians*; but *Ministers* of *Christ*, who have voluntarily and deliberately taken upon our selves a *Sacred Office* in the *Christian Church*; and have devoted our selves peculiarly to the Service of Those Souls for which *Christ* died.

THIS is an awful and solemn Consideration, which ought to govern our whole Conduct, and spread its influence over Every Part of our whole Behaviour. As We have chosen this Office, I trust, upon such good Grounds and Motives, as will justify Us, before God, in what We solemnly declared at the first Step We took towards it, *Viz.* That We trusted We were *moved to it by the Holy Spirit of God*; it behoves Us, as much as We value the Favour of God, and our own Eternal Salvation, to take the greatest Care that No One of Those committed to Us, fall short of the great Reward which all Christians have in their Eye. If *We* be not wanting, on *our* Part, towards this; no Wick- edness or Wilfullness of *Others* will be charged upon *Us*. But if there be any wilful Defect in *our* Care and Watch- fulness; Those who perish will not perish without *our* Guilt mixt with *their own*: and We must answer at the Great Tribunal for our Share in so unspeakable an Evil.

BUT not only this. The frequent Consideration of Our selves, as *Ministers of Christ*, will be an infallible Rule of Judgment and Action to Us, in every Circumstance of our Office. It will guide Us into the true Notion of the *Dignity* of it: And it will lead Us to keep up, in some degree, our whole Conduct to that *Dignity*. There is, without doubt, a great and highly valuable *Dignity* in our *Office*. But it is in vain, my Brethren, for *Us* to boast, or so much as to speak, of it, unless We understand

what it is ; and, after We do understand it, unless We live and act, as if We our selves were sensible of it. We must first reverence Our selves, before We can expect that Others should reverence Us : *Reverence our selves* ;—Not by demanding outward Marks of Respect ; but by such a Behaviour, as will naturally command them, by attracting the Real Esteem of those around Us ; and by such a Conduct, as will convince all who are Witnesses to it, that We are in earnest, and know what We mean by the just Value We set upon our Office.

OUR *Dignity* is our *nearer Relation* to Christ : And this *nearer Relation* is contracted by means of that particular *Function* which We have, under his Eye, and according to his Will, deliberately and seriously undertaken ; the Office of helping forward and promoting, in the World, the great End which He proposed in coming down from Heaven, and living and dying for Mankind. Now, all *Relations to Christ*, are either our Honour, or Reproach ; our great Glory, or our great Shame ; our higher Reward, or our deeper Condemnation ; according as We our selves behave our selves in them. A wicked *Christian* has indeed a worthy Name, *viz*, that of a *Christian* : But He himself has no Dignity by taking upon Him that Name, whilst He continues wicked. He reflects Shame upon the best *Name* in the World ; and the *Name* He has assumed reflects Shame and Ignominy upon *Him*, whilst He shews himself utterly unworthy of it. So it is, and so it must be, *my Brethren*,  
with

with Us. The *Office* We have undertaken, is a *Glorious* Office; I will say, a God-like Office,—to carry forward the Purposes of God himself, in the Direction of Mankind to his Favour and their own Eternal Happiness. There is a *Dignity* and an Honour in it, consider'd in this View, not to be equal'd by any of the highest Offices of this World, deck'd out with all their Pomp and Shew. But *We* can have no *Dignity* accrue to *Us* from this Office, if *We* be so unhappy as openly and plainly to oppose our selves to the main Design of it. The higher the Honour, the greater the Dignity of the Office; the more conspicuous will it render every wilful Deviation of ours from it. In a Word, It is impossible, *He* should have Dignity *in* Himself, or conciliate Respect and Honour *to* himself; who, making the best and most glorious Profession with his Mouth, is seen openly to contradict it in the Tenor of his Conduct. *He* only receives a *Dignity* from it, who adds some *Dignity* to it, in his proportion, by his excellent Life and Christian Doctrine. And it is *He* only who cannot fail of procuring to Himself the *Respect* of All whose Respect is valuable, who shews that He respects himself; and, not in Words but in Deeds, looks upon himself as more nearly, than others, related to his great *Lord* and *Master*. This, I say, is *one* great Use of our considering our selves as the *Ministers* of *Christ*; that it will lead Us to the true Notion of the *Dignity* of *our Office*, in the imitation of *Him* whose *Ministers* We have undertaken to be. And this Notion, thoroughly imbibed, and received into our Hearts, will spread it self over our whole  
Lives;

Lives; and engage Us to frame and fashion our whole Deportment in such a manner, as that What is, in *it self*, the Higheſt *Glory*, may not, thro' *our own* Willfulneſs, become our Shame; and tend to our Indignity and Condemnation, when we ſhall come to appear before our Righteous Judge.

BUT there is another and very important Uſe to be ſtill made of this *firſt* and *principal* Point, *viz.* the Conſideration of Our ſelves as the *Ministers* of *Jeſus Chriſt*: and that is, to be perſuaded, from thence, to take all our Directions; all our Maxims; all our Rules both of Life and Doctrine; from *Him* alone, whoſe *Ministers* We profeſs our ſelves to be. From the firſt Moment of our devoting our ſelves to *his* Miniſtry, We become totally engaged to him. We are no longer under any other Guidance but *His*. This is implied in the thing it ſelf. It is an Abſurdity, a direct Contradiſtion, to call or think our ſelves The *Ministers* of *Chriſt*, unleſs We eſteem our ſelves under the ſtricteſt Obligation to conſult and follow Him alone as our ultimate Director and Guide. This is indeed, at once our *Honour*; our *Happineſs*; and our *Duty*. It is our *Honour*; becauſe it is our Adherence and Reſemblance to *Him*, to whom God *hath given a Name above Every Name*. It is our *Happineſs*; becauſe We may be ſure, We cannot err, or wander from the Truth, or from any thing neceſſary, ſo as to *hurt* our ſelves, whiſt We follow ſuch a Guide in the Uprightneſs and Sincerity of our Hearts. And it is our *Duty*; becauſe We have made our ſelves his Servants and

*Ministers*

*Ministers* : and, as placed in such a Relation to Him, must be guilty of a great and unpardonable Sin in not doing it.

FROM hence it will appear to Us, that We must throw off all regard to Our selves, to our own Wishes or Inclinations, to our own private Opinions and Notions, any farther than as they are perfectly agreeable to his *express Declarations*. And from hence it as plainly appears, that We must not be the *Followers* or *Ministers* of Men, in any such Sense as is inconsistent with our constant *Uniform* Regard to *Christ* and *his* Will. There is no other infallible Oracle for Us, but This : And This will be sufficient for all our Purposes, if We have no Purposes but what become Christians, and are suitable to our Holy Profession. In our Lives and Conversations, This is common to Us with all other *Christians*, that from *his* Laws, from *his* Promises and Threatnings, We must take all our Rules of private Behaviour : And We have This to add peculiar to our selves, that, from the same Director we must learn effectually to be *Examples to the Flock* ; to excell in *good Works* ; and to let the *light* of those *good Works* so shine before Men, that *They* may from them be led to glorify our Father which is in Heaven.

AND then, as to our *Preaching*, and that Great Duty incumbent upon Us of instructing Others ; how can We possibly hope to do it, either with Satisfaction to our own Consciences, or with the Hope of God's Favour accompanying  
our

our Labours, unless We frame and fashion all our Teaching upon the *Gospel* deliver'd by *Christ*, or by his *immediate Disciples* from *Him*? We say, We are the *Ministers* of *Christ*; beseeching Men, in his Name, to be reconciled to God through *Him*; and to be what He has declared They ought to be, in order to be accepted by God. How therefore, can We be the *Ministers* of *Christ* in this Work, unless We take all our Directions from Him: when it is so very evident, that, as far as We neglect to do this; as far as We follow our own Imaginations and Conceptions, or the Imaginations and Directions of any other Uninspired Men, without comparing them with the *Will* of *Christ*; so far, We cease to be *His Ministers* or Servants, and become the *Ministers* of *our own* Will and Pleasure, or of the Will of *other* weak Men like our selves? And how can We teach and advise and beseech Men to be reconciled to God; and to behave themselves so as to be accepted by Him; without declaring to them those *Terms*, upon which alone They may be thus accepted? And how can We lay before them those *Terms*, unless We know them our selves? And how can We possibly know them our selves, but from *Him*, who alone had Authority from God to propose them to the whole World, where-ever the Sound of his *Gospel* should be heard?

You will forgive Me, MY BRETHREN, if I insist upon this as the *Principal* of *all* Considerations in which *We* have any Concern. It is in order to impress That upon

*my*



*my own* Conscience, as well as *Yours*, without which We cannot take One right Step in our whole Duty ; but under the constant influence of which, We may be happy, and go on secure in the Satisfaction of doing our Duty thro' every Branch of it. I should esteem my self utterly unworthy of the Name of a *Minister* of the *Gospel* ; and much more so, of the *Relation* which I now stand in to You ; if, in putting you in remembrance of any Instances of your Duty, I could ever forget this Great Foundation of all ; or should ever cease to inculcate this upon *You* and *My self*, That it is in vain we call our selves the *Ministers* or Servants of *Christ*, unless we take *Him* and his *Gospel*, as He left it *Us*, for the Rule of our Preaching his Will : and that it is in vain we preach to Men the glad Tidings of Salvation, unless We study those Sacred Books in which alone those glad Tidings are to be found ; and study them so effectually, and with so just Conceptions of them, as from *Them* only to lay before our Hearers those *Terms* of *Salvation*, which *They alone* can teach us. And happy will it be for *Us*, if We continue constant to this Rule. It will be our Guide, and our Support, in every Branch of our Office. It will overrule our Hearts, and Practice, in every Circumstance of it. It will be a Fountain of *Infallible Directions* to our Flocks. And it will entitle our selves to the Favour of that Great *Master*, from whose Mouth alone we thus seek for True Knowledge.

II. THE *second General Point*, I mentioned at first, was, That We ought often to consider our selves as *Protestants* ; Members and *Ministers* of a *Church* reformed from the *Superstition* and *Tyranny* of the *Church of Rome*. And I mention this, to put our selves in remembrance of what Length of Time, and our own seeming Security from Danger, may too often remove from our View ; and yet, what is of great Importance to have often before our Eyes. I would not have it thought, that I intend by this to stir up any undue Zeal, or Resentment, against the Persons of Any who are Members. of that Communion. I think They have the *Common Right*, with All others, as to their *Religious Tenets*, (properly so called) to be treated with Humanity, and to be convinced only by Argument. What their *Principles* lead to, with respect to the *Civil Government* ; or what their Practices threaten ; *This* is the proper Concern of the *Civil Government*. But as to *Us*, whose only Concern, as Preachers of the Gospel, is with their *Religion*, (which is to be treated by Us with *Spiritual Weapons* only,) the present Consideration will be of a *double Use*.

THE *first* arises from hence, That it is very apparent, from the Experience of every Week, and almost every Hour ; That Those of *that Communion* cease not, Day or Night, to perpetuate and press all their antient Claims ; that They watch every Opportunity, and make use of every

every Art, to ingratiate, first *Themselves*, and then *their Doctrines*, to the Minds of the Unstable, and the Unthoughtful Part of our World ; to infuse into Those who come in their Way, the most agreeable, but false, Notions of their Religion ; and to seduce Many out of the Flocks committed to our Care. From hence, I say, arises One Reason for our frequent Consideration of our selves as Ministers in a *Protestant Church*; That We may not be lull'd asleep, whilst such an *Enemy is sowing Tares in the Field* of it ; That we may not be led to think that the ancient *Controversies* between *Us* and *Them* are of no Moment : but that We may frequently review them in the Course of our Studies ; and so thoroughly comprehend them, that We may be ready and prepared to resolve the Doubts, and answer the Scruples, which may at any time be artificially conveyed into the Minds of our People ; and be always arm'd with every thing necessary to combat the Sophistry, and to wipe off the False Colourings, of the Adversary ; and so to preserve Those who, without our Help, must too probably be carried away with the fair Outside and Appearance of things.

*ANOTHER* Use of this *Consideration* will be, That, rightly apprehended, it will prevent *Us* from giving Those same *Adversaries* that great Advantage which they have always made Use of most effectually against *Us*, by preserving *Us* from all *Inconsistencies*, in our Arguings and Practices, as *Protestants*. I mean, by leading *Us* (as it must do, if

we pursue it justly and sincerely) to an Uniform Set of Principles and Behaviour; by shewing Us the necessity of not Claiming, or Practising, Any thing *our selves*, which We utterly condemn in *Them*; and for the sake of which (*chiefly*, if not *only*,) We separated from them. *With* this, We have nothing to fear from any the strongest Attaque that can be made from that Quarter, in the Way of Debate or Argument. But *without* it, I will be bold to say, They are so well instructed, and know so well the Force of *Topics* taken from *our* Weaknesses, and Inconsistencies, that it is in vain to hope for much Success against them: Not to mention here a very important Consideration; That All *Truth* must of necessity be *Uniform* and *Self-Consistent*. I pass on now,

III. To the last *General* Point I propos'd at first: which was, That We must consider Our selves as *Ministers* in the *Church* of *England*, peculiarly so call'd, as it is at present Establish'd amongst Us. And this I am so far from wishing to be ever left out of our most serious Thoughts, when we are considering our Office, or our Duty; that, I think, We are under all the Obligation to the contrary, which the Voluntary and Serious Engagement of Our Selves to this *Church* can possibly lay upon Us. I have time only to mention *one* or *two* Particulars under this *Head*; which yet will comprehend most of What may, at another Opportunity, be more largely insisted upon.

WE have deliberately chosen, not merely *Conformity* to this Church, but the *Ministerial Duty* in it. And if We have acted sincerely in *this*, as I trust We all have; This *Choice*, I think, must have been made, because It appears to Us, (who must be determined by *our own* Judgments, as *Others* are by *Theirs*) after the most mature deliberation, all things considered, to be the most Unexceptionable and most Excellent of *All* which have come within our View: Or, in other Words, a *Church*, in which, We truly think, We can do *GOD*, and the Souls of Men, most service. *This* therefore, We are obliged, agreeably to our voluntary Engagements, to defend by our Arguments; as Persons always ready to give a *Reason* for the *Choice* We have made. *This* we are obliged to comply with, as to Its Rules and Orders, in all our Administrations; as well as to adorn by our *Examples*, whilst We continue *Ministers* in it.

IN all our *Defenses* of It, against Those who differ from Us, on each Hand, We must never forget the *Two former* Considerations, that *We* are *Christians*, and *Protestants*; and that *This* Church is a *Christian* and a *Protestant* Church. The View of these *two Points* will make all our Arguments Powerful and Consistent. The Meek and Good Spirit of Christianity will govern all our Zeals; and give it not only a *Beauty*, but an *Effect*, beyond what it could otherwise have. And the great Foundation-  
stone

-stone of all *Protestantism* laid down always for the Ground-work, will probably make whatever We shall build upon it, *Uniform* and *Strong* beyond all Danger. These Two absolutely necessary Points, will teach us to endeavour to convince the *Judgments* of Those who differ from Us, but not to confound or injure their *Persons* ; and will, at the same time, shew Us the *Only good Method* of doing 'it.

IN our *Ministrations* in *this Church*, Our Engagements oblige Us to keep to the *Rules* and *Orders* laid down plainly and expressly in it : Which, as it is established by *Law*, has by that same *Law* tied Us down to the *Orders* and *Ceremonies* appointed in it ; and indeed, has effectually and plainly forbidden *all other*, besides *Those prescribed* in the *Book of Common-Prayer*.

THESE Orders and Prescriptions, I think, we are strictly obliged to observe, as the Rule and Measure of our Behaviour in all the Administrations belonging to our several Offices. And this *Rule*, I trust, (as We ought, so) We may all follow, as the safest : without being censured, either on one hand, for not adding *Other Ceremonies, Arbitrary* and *Unprescribed* ; or, on the other hand, for not omitting or varying *Any* of Those which are appointed.

WE must add to this a Constant Care to perform the publick Services of the *Church* in a Manner that may shew Us to have a Mind to preserve and to conciliate a Respect and serious Regard to them: behaving our selves in all our *Administrations*, with the utmost Decency and Gravity: reading the *Offices* with a distinct, deliberate, and manly Pronunciation; without the Affectation of any thing Theatrical on *one* hand; or any thing Low, Careless, Dead, and Spiritless, on the *other*. And to all We must add the strictest regard to our own Lives and Conversations; That our Conduct may adorn our Profession; that our Care of our Flocks may be suitable, in some Degree, to our Obligations; that our *Examples* may *teach*: Without which, all our *Words* and all our *Preaching*, will not, I fear, *teach* Any who attend upon Us; or reconcile any *One* of our Adversaries to the *Communion* We would most willingly recommend to Them.

AND thus I have given You my best Thoughts, upon Those principal Points, which I propos'd to speak of at this time. To These, all other Particulars relating to our Duty in our Function, and our Behaviour with respect to All around us, (whether *agreeing with Us, or not,*) may be reduced; and rightly judg'd of, from them. But the Time does not now allow Me to shew this distinctly in the several Instances which might be named; or to enter into any other Important Considerations, as I once design'd to do;  
and.

and as I shall still hope to do, upon another like Opportunity, if it shall please God to bring us together again.

AND NOW, MY BRETHREN, having put You, and My self, in Mind of Those General Lessons, in which You and My self are equally and constantly concern'd, in the Execution of our Office ; Give me leave to add one Word, before I conclude, with relation to that *Personal Intercourse* which must necessarily be between Us. And, as to this ; I sincerely speak it, I desire No *Regard* from *You*, but in Proportion to the *Regard* You shall ever meet with from *Me*. If You find that No difference, real or supposed, in our Opinions upon any sort of Matters, shall at any time hinder or obstruct the *Impartiality* of *Justice* in all my Proceedings with You ; if You always shall meet with a Kind Reception, an Open Ear, a Ready Assistance, the Sincere Advice, and Every Instance of Friendship in My Power, always prepared to exert it self for your Service : I may then hope, You cannot refuse Me the just and natural result of all this ; the return, on *your* Part, of what I shall always highly value.

MY BRETHREN, It is my Heart's Desire, that our whole Behaviour, in the *Relation* We have contracted, may be to our mutual entire Satisfaction. Nothing, I promise, shall be wanting on my Part, which is agreeable either to Justice, or Affection. I shall always be glad of any Assurances or Advices from You, as Occasion



sion shall offer. And I shall now end All, by praying God so to direct both *You* and *Me*, that We may live together here in a well-grounded Peace and Love; and, after our Course of Duty run, may meet one another, at the Great Day of Accounts, with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory: When Our Great Lord, (whose *Ministers* We are, if We follow his Directions,) shall come to judge the World in Righteousness; and to render to Us all, not according to the Opinion of *Others* about Us, but according to *our own* Works, and to what We our selves have taught and acted, during our *Ministration* here below.

*F I N I S.*



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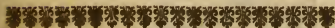
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THE  
BISHOP of *Chester's* Charge  
IN HIS  
VISITATION.



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**BISHOP**  
OF  
**Chester's Charge**  
IN HIS  
**Primary Visitation**  
AT  
**CHESTER.**

*May 5. 1691.*

*Nicholas Stratford. 1633-1707*

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for Thomas Bennet at the Half Moon in  
St. Pauls Church Yard, 1692.

BISHOP  
OF  
Chester's Charge

(in his  
Pastoral Visitation)

AT  
CHESTER

1691

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T H E  
Bishop of *Chester's* Charge, &c.

My Dear Brethren ;

**S**INCE nothing can more conduce to the Edification of the Church in Faith and Holiness, than that its Pastors be duly qualified for their Work: I think my time cannot be better employed in this my Primary Visitation, than in putting you in remembrance, what manner of Men the Pastors of the Church ought to be ; and in quickening you and my self, to the faithful Discharge of those great Duties which are incumbent upon us.

In Order to both which Purposes, you need do no more than seriously reflect upon those things, which before your admission to this Sacred Office, you solemnly before God and his Church, profess'd to believe, and promis'd to perform.

The first Question proposed to you, as preparatory to your Ordination to Priesthood, was, *Do you think in your heart that you be truly called, according to the Will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Order of this Church of England, to the Order and Ministry of Priesthood ?* To which you Answered, *I think it :* That is, I think it in my heart, I am verily perswaded, that I am so truly called, according to the Will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Order of this Church of *England*.

These latter Words [*The Order of the Church of England*] are not put to denote another Rule, different from the *Will of Christ* ; but are rather added, by way of Explication, to shew, Who those are that are called according to his Will, *viz.* Those who are so qualified as the Church of *England* requires.

B

The

The Call here meant, is the inward Call from God; which must go before to prepare a Person, for the outward Call from the Church, in setting him apart to this Office, by *Prayer* and *Imposition of hands*.

This inward Call consists in the due qualification of the Person, for this weighty Work ( for God never calls a Man to any Employment, which he does not before in some good measure fit him for ): These Qualifications may be reduced to Three General Heads: That the *Life*, That the *Learning*, That the *Design* of the Person be such, as are agreeable to the Sacredness of the Office. All which are contain'd, in the Caution the Bishop gives to the Person who presents to him the Persons to be Ordain'd. *Take heed, that the Persons whom you present to us, be apt and meet for their Learning and godly Conversation, to exercise their Ministry duly, to the Honour of God, and the edifying of his Church.*

*First*, That he be for *Life*, *blameless, sober, just, holy, temperate*, as *St. Paul* prescribes in his Epistle to *Titus*: That is, that he be not addicted to any of those Vices, which would be a Disparagement to his Ministry, and hinder the good effect of it; and that he be indued with all those Vertues, which may adorn it. Whosoever therefore lives in the Practice of any such Vice, as will lessen his Authority, and expose his Ministry to Contempt, he is not qualified, according to the Order of the Church of *England*.

*Secondly*, That he be for *Learning*, so well acquainted with the Sense of the Holy Scriptures, as to be able to instruct his Flock, in all that is necessary for them both to know and to do, in order to their Eternal Salvation; and to press their Duty upon them by such Considerations, as may be apt to work upon their Wills, and induce them to the Practice of it. Thus *St. Paul* advises *Timothy*, to make choice of such for Pastors, who shall be *able to teach others*; and commands *Titus* to see, that those  
he

he ordained were such, as were able by sound Doctrine, *to exhort and convince Gainsayers*. Whosoever therefore is, Tit. 1. 9. so ignorant, that he is not able to instruct his People in every necessary Point, both of Faith and Practice; and to enforce their Duty by fit Perswasives, he is not called according to the Will of Christ. No man doubtless can imagine, That it is the Will of Christ that the Blind should lead the Blind; that they should be set to be Guides to others, who know not the way themselves. The

*Third, Necessary Qualification, is a due Intention; That a Man be inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon him this Office and Ministry, to serve God for the promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of his People; as it is express'd in the Office for the ordering of Deacons.* Not but that a Mans intention may be approved by God, that hath in it a mixture of respect to Secular Advantage; but then it must be so much Inferiour, in such perfect Subordination to the other, as his principal end, that he despise all Worldly Regards in comparison with it; and resolve to persevere in his Work, though he meet with all the discouragements in the world to oppose him.

Though, blessed be God, there are many of you, *my Brethren*, not only whose Life and Learning are such, as your Adversaries can make no just Exception against; but who also give sufficient Proof, that your intention was right, by your unwearied diligence, in the whole and every part of your Work; yet I fear there may be some, who if tryed by this Rule, will be forced to confess, that they are not so qualified, as the Laws of Christ, and of this Church require. Can it be thought, that they have the Glory of God principally in their eyes, who endeavour to get into this Holy Employment, by such unworthy Means as God abhors, by false Titles, and forged Certificates? Can they be thought to aim chiefly at the Salvation of Souls, who leave the Work wholly to others, and take the Wages only to themselves? Who

for their ease and pleasure absent themselves from their Charges, and think that Curate the best qualified, who may be hired at the cheapest rate ?

And here, my Brethren, I shall charge your Consciences with Two Things relating to this Matter.

*First*, That you never send a Person to be Ordained, with a Lye in his hand ; that is, that you never signify to the Bishop, that you will take a Person for your Curate ( in case he shall think fit to Ordain him ) whom you intend never to employ in that Service : For though a Title is indeed no Qualification for the Office, but a cautionary Provision, only for the Maintainance of the Person ; yet to bring a false Title, is a plain Argument, that the Man is destitute of that Truth and Honesty, which are necessarily requisite to so Sacred an Office as this is.

*Secondly*, That you never give a Testimonial of the good Life and Conversation of any Person, whose Life and Conversation you do not certainly know to be such. Considering, that if the Bishop gives Orders to any unworthy Man, upon the Credit he gives to your Certificate, you must answer to God, for all the Scandal that is brought upon the Church thereby, and for the Ruine of all those Souls, which are misled by his bad Example.

In the next place, these Two Questions were proposed to you, before your Admission to the Office of Priesthood.

I. *Are you perswaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all Doctrine required of necessity for eternal Salvation, through Faith in Christ Jesus ?*

II. *Are you determined out of the said Scriptures, to instruct the People committed to your Charge, and to teach nothing ( as required of necessity to eternal Salvation ) but that which you shall be perswaded may be concluded and proved by the Scriptures ?*

To the First you Answered, *I am so perswaded :* To the



the Second, *I have so determin'd by Gods Grace.*

That the Holy Scriptures contain *sufficiently*, all Doctrine required of necessity to eternal Salvation: That is, That they not only contain all such necessary Doctrine, but in some place or other, so *clearly* contain it, as that it may be understood by all those, for whose Salvation the Scriptures were designed, I take it for granted you all firmly believe; It being the main Foundation of the Religion of Protestants, in opposition to the Church of *Rome*, which by asserting the deficiency of the Holy Scriptures, in both these respects, hath thereby open'd a door to those many Innovations She hath introduc'd into the Christian Doctrine and Worship, and may (if opportunity shall serve) introduce as many more: I shall not therefore insist upon this. That, which it may be more needful to speak to, is;

*Secondly*, What by *God's Grace* you determined to do, viz. *To instruct the People committed to your Charge, out of the said Scriptures; and to teach nothing as required of necessity to eternal Salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded,* may be concluded and proved by the Scriptures.

One of the prime Qualifications *St. Paul* requires in a Pastor, is, That he be *Διδάσκων*, not only *able*, but *apt* 2 Tim. 2. 24. and ready to teach; and elsewhere he describes him, as one, that *labours in the Word and Doctrine*; and that 1 Tim. 5. 17. *This Labour in the Word and Doctrine*, was Necessary, not only in the Apostles days, when the Christian Religion was to be planted in the World; but is still so, is manifest, from the ends, for which he tells us, *Christ* appointed Pastors and Teachers; which were not only the converting of Infidels, the gathering of the Sheep that were scatter'd abroad into the Fold; but *the perfecting of the Saints, and the edifying of the Body of Christ.* Ephes. 4. 12.

'Tis indeed strange, That any Man should think this Work unnecessary, as long as there are Sinners to be converted from the Error of their ways, and Saints to be edified

edified in their Holy Faith; as long as Souls are in so great danger of being eternally lost, through the daily Assaults of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

And it would be yet more strange, if any Men who own themselves *Ministers of the Church of England*, should think they can be excused from it; when in the Exhortation before their receiving of Priests Orders, they were told, *That to teach, and to premonish, to seek and provide for the Lords Family, was that they were called unto.* When upon the Bishop's demanding, Whether they were determin'd to instruct the People committed to their Charge out of the Scriptures? They Answered, *They had so determin'd by God's Grace.* When in the very Words of Ordination, it was laid upon them, as a Charge, *To be faithful Dispensers of the Word of God.*

Now this Teaching is either *publick* or *private*: Of the private I shall speak, when I come to the next Question save one: That which is *publick*, is to be perform'd these Two ways especially; by *Preaching* and by *Catechising*. And,

First as to Preaching, Consider that solemn and dreadful Charge St. Paul lays upon Timothy, *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom, Preach the Word.* Consider also, That our Church hath enjoyned every allow'd Preacher that is beneficed, *to have a Sermon every Lord's Day in the Year.* And as a farther Enforcement, That His Majesty hath charged all the Bishops, *To see that the Clergy in their respective Diocesses, be duly resident upon their Livings, preaching the Word of God plainly.*

Letter to  
the Bishop of  
London.

How assiduous many of the Ancients were in this part of their Office, and how necessary they thought it so to be, I need not tell you; but methinks a serious reflection upon it, should make those not only *blush* but *tremble*, who live in the Neglect of it, who are so far from ob-  
serving

serving the Laws of our Church, while they boast of more than ordinary Conformity to it, that they have not perhaps more than one Sermon in a Year, for two Benefices.

Now, that we may in this way of Teaching, be successful to the Salvation of our Hearers, we are here directed both as to the *Matter* and the *Manner* of it.

*First*, As to the *Matter* of our Preaching, it must be out of the Holy Scriptures: But since of the things contain'd in the Holy Scriptures, some are *necessary*, some are *profitable* only; and since of these things which are only *profitable*, some are more, others are less profitable; our Pulpit-Discourses should be chiefly confined to those Truths, which are *necessary* or *highly profitable*, in order to eternal Salvation; omitting all School-Niceties, and subtle Disputes, which are of no Practical Use; and never let any Truth, which is call'd in question by none of your Hearers, be made a Matter of Controversie in the Pulpit.

Endeavour effectually to convince your Hearers, how by our Apostasie from God, we have made our selves obnoxious to His heavy Displeasure; and that there is a necessity of a Mediator between *God* and Man. Shew them who this Mediator is, and how he is qualified for this great Work; what the Terms are, upon which God hath graciously promised to pardon our Sins, and how ready he is, upon these Terms, of Faith, Repentance, and sincere future Obedience, to receive us into his Favour: Press those Graces and Duties most, which are most comprehensive, as Justice and Charity. Teach them *to render to all their dues, as tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, &c.* Represent *CHARITY* to them, in all those branches of it, in which it is described by *St. Paul* in *1 Cor. 13*. Set your selves especially against those sins, which are most visible in your Auditors; as *St. Paul*, who  
reason'd

Act 24. 25.

reason'd of Righteousness and Chastity, when he preach-  
ed before an unjust and adulterous *Felix*. More particu-  
larly, in pursuance of His Majesties Letter, preach fre-  
quently against profane Swearing, Perjury, Drunkenness,  
and Profanation of the Lords Day; and when such a  
Sermon is to be preached, read to your People such Sta-  
tute-Law or Laws, as are provided against that Sin, which  
is the Subject of the Day : Which Statutes, together  
with his Majesties Letter, I have formerly sent you. And  
let not only the more gross Sins of the Flesh, but the  
more subtle Sins of the Spirit, (such as Pride, Envy, Ma-  
lice, &c.) be exposed to your People in their odious na-  
ture, and aggravating Circumstances. Acquaint them not  
only with those Duties, to which they are all in common  
obliged, as they are men and Christians; but with those  
special Duties, which are incumbent upon them in their  
different Ages, States and Relations. In short, let that be  
the drift of your preaching, which is the design of the  
whole Gospel of Christ, *To teach men to deny all Ungod-*  
linefs and Worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously and  
Godly in this present World.

Tit. 2. 11, 12.

Secondly, As to the Manner of Preaching, passing over  
other particulars, I shall mention Three only at present,  
Two of which are here sufficiently implied: Preach the  
Word *sincerely, plainly and affectionately.*

1. *Sincerely*; Which is implied in these Words, *That*  
*you will teach nothing as required of necessity to eternal Sal-*  
*vation, but that which you shall be perswaded may be proved*  
*by the Scriptures.* For Sincerity consists, as in teaching  
all that the Scripture makes necessary; so in teaching no-  
thing for necessary, that is foreign to the Scripture; as  
the Church of Rome does in her new Creed, imposing ma-  
ny Doctrines as necessary to Salvation, which are not on-  
ly Strangers to the Scriptures, but plainly contrary to the  
Doctrines, which are there taught.

2. Plainly,

2. Plainly, and to the capacity of your Hearers ; which is implied in the Word *instruct* : For how can a man be instructed by a Discourse, which he knows not the meaning of ? He defeats the design of his Preaching, and betrays his Hypocrisie, who renders that obscure, which he pretends to reveal. To which I add ;

3. Preach *Affectionately*, with that warmth and earnestness of Spirit, which becomes matters of the greatest moment : It would grieve a Man to hear matters of the greatest moment, so coldly and drowsily delivered, as if the Preacher did not himself believe what he said, and were afraid lest his Hearers should be brought to believe it. O my Brethren, let us but seriously consider the inestimable worth of souls, the unvaluable price that was paid for them, what danger they are in of being eternally lost, how dreadful our accounts will shortly be, if they be lost through our slowness and laziness : Let us but consider what Heaven and Hell mean, what it is to be everlastingly saved or damned, and we shall then think our greatest zeal and fervency, will be little enough, for such a Work as this.

I shall say no more concerning Preaching, but proceed to the next way of publick teaching, which is ;

*Secondly*, By Catechising, or instructing persons in the Principles of Religion : Which is indeed but a more familiar way of Preaching. This is a Duty laid upon you by the Canon and Statute-Law both. The *Fifty Ninth* Canon under a severe Penalty, requires *every Rector, Vicar and Curate, upon every Lord's Day in the Afternoon, to examine, and instruct the Youth, and the more ignorant People of his Parish in the Catechism*. The same is made your Duty by Act of Parliament, in the first Rubrick after the Catechism ; and because some (who are apt enough to censure their Brethren for breaking other Laws) can too easily dispense with themselves in this, His Majesty hath charged the Bishops to see, *That all the Clergy*

Let. to the  
Bish. of Lond.

*in their respective Diocesses do Catechise the Youth.* To which, if we add the Practice of the Apostles, ( the great Master-Builders of the Church ) who first taught Men the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ: And lastly, the voluntary Engagement you lye under to it, methinks nothing can be thought wanting to oblige you effectually to this Duty.

But now should we set aside all these Considerations, and consider only, how advantageous this Work is to the Welfare of the Souls committed to our care; the great Benefits they would reap by it, the great Mischiefs they fall into by the Neglect of it, one would think we should need no other Motive to put us upon the diligent practice of it.

What is the Reason that our Sermons are generally of so little effect? That our People hear us year after year, and many of them are never the wiser, *are ever learning, and never come to the Knowledge of the Truth?* One main Reason doubtless, is, because they were never prepared to understand our Sermons, and to profit by them, by being first more familiarly instructed in the Principles of Religion. What's the Reason, That many are so easily seduced to Error and Vice, but because they were never well rooted and grounded in the Faith? *Train up a Child in the way that he should go, and he will not depart from it when he is old.*

Prov. 22. 6.

As therefore, my Brethren, you tender the Salvation of your People, set your selves without delay, to this so advantageous and necessary a Work: And that you may do it the more effectually, I give it you in Charge, to preach constantly in the Afternoon, upon some part of the Church Catechism; and to Examine some of the Young People of your Parish quite thorow it, as oft as you preach upon it. And that Parents and Masters may take the greater care to send their Children and Servants, to be instructed by you, do not only frequently and earnestly



nestly exhort them to it, but thorowly acquaint them with the great Benefits that will accrue, not only to their Children and Servants, but likewise to themselves thereby; as their Children will by this means be render'd more dutiful and obedient, and their Servants more faithful and diligent.

Having solemnly declared, That *You are perswaded, that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all Doctrine required of necessity to eternal Salvation*; and that you were determin'd out of the said Scriptures, to instruct the People committed to your Charge: In the next place you promised, *To give your faithful diligence always so to minister the Doctrine, Sacraments and Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and Realm hath received the same, according to the commandment of God*; that is, as God hath prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.

Of *Ministring the Doctrine of Christ*, I have already spoken, in what I have said about Preaching and Catechising.

As to the Sacrament of Baptism, I shall at present only put you in mind of some few things, which are either expressely or implicitly required by the Rubricks.

*First*, Let your People know, That Baptism being the solemn Admission of a Person into the publick Society of Christians, it is very unbecoming its Nature and Design, to have it administer'd in private. Admonish them therefore to bring their Children to be baptiz'd in the publick Congregation, lest by their refusing so to do, Christ should reckon them in the number of those, who are ashamed of him and his Religion before men.

Rubrick before private Baptism.

*Secondly*, Admonish your People, That it is most convenient, that Baptism should not be administer'd, but upon Sundays and Holy-days, when the greatest number of People come together; because in the Baptism of Infants,

Rubr. before publick Baptism.

every Man present, may be put in remembrance of his own Profession, made to God in his Baptism. Exhort them therefore diligently to attend throughout the whole Administration, to reflect upon their past lives, and to consider how far they have kept, and wherein they have broken their Baptismal Vow.

Rubr. before,  
private Baptism.

*Thirdly*, Admonish your People, not to defer the Baptism of their Children longer than the first or second Sunday next after their Birth, lest by unnecessary delay the Child die, before it be dedicated to the Service of the Lord Jesus.

Can. 61.  
Rubr. after  
the Catechism

*Fourthly*, I add, (as being nearly allied to Baptism) That you take due care to prepare the young People of your Parishes for Confirmation: *So soon as Children are come to a competent Age, and can say in their Mother Tongue, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and can answer to the other Questions in the short Catechism, they are to be brought to the Bishop to be confirm'd*: But they are not to be thought to be of a competent age, (tho' they can repeat the Words) till they be capable of knowing the meaning of them, and their own great Concernment therein. For what profit can they receive by Confirmation, unless they understand what the design of it is, and the Obligation they take upon themselves thereby? And this, my Brethren, is to be your care. You are required either to bring or send in writing, with your hand subscribed thereunto, the Names of all such Persons within your Parishes, as you shall think fit to be presented to the Bishop to be confirmed: And how can you think them fit, before you have examined them, and find that they have a competent knowledge of these things, and are willing to consent to the Vow that was made in their Names, and to take it upon themselves?

Rubr. after  
the Catechism

As to the *Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, (the too general



neral neglect of which, is just matter of lamentation) make your People know that they are not left at liberty, whether they will receive it or not; but that it is a necessary Duty laid upon them, by the express command of Christ: That if they sincerely love Christ, or have any Value for Christ's Love to them, they will need no other motive to induce them to it; That it is their Duty to receive it, not only sometime or other before they die, (perhaps at their last breath) but frequently while they live, if they have opportunity: That the first Christians made it a constant part of their publick Worship. And I beseech you to administer it in your Churches, as often as you can get a convenient number together to receive it; to be sure, so often that every person may have opportunity of receiving it at least three times in the Year.

As to *Discipline*, observe more especially the Rubrick before the Communion, in keeping back those Offenders from the Lords Table, whom you are there required not to admit, (viz. *Notorious evil Livers, or such as have done any wrong to their Neighbours, by which the Congregation is offended*) and in giving an Account of them to the Ordinary.

And here, my Brethren, I desire you seriously to consider, That in this, and in your Answer to the next Question, You promised *faithful diligence*, in doing the Duties of your Office; so many and so weighty indeed are they, that the utmost diligence imaginable, is little enough for the due performance of them; our Comfort is, all that God requires is *faithful diligence*. If we do not chuse to neglect any Duty, or to do it carelessly; but sincerely endeavour to perform them all as we ought, in what we fall short, God will be merciful to us, and graciously accept the Will for the Deed. And this is the least that God will accept; be not therefore slothful in this great business, but apply your selves constantly to your Work, and *whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.*

*might.* I might tell you, that the nature and design of our Work requires this; That the Names by which we are in Scripture signified, (as Stewards, Ministers, Shepherds, Watchmen, Labourers,) do all import diligence and industry; that the Work is of all others, the most excellent, worthy of all the pains we can lay out upon it; I might set before you the example of our blessed Saviour, and his Apostles, of all those faithful Pastors who have gone before us: But I shall only add for your encouragement, That your Recompence from God, will be proportionable to your labour; by how much the more abundant you are in this work of the Lord, by so much the more abundant will your Reward in Heaven be.

But to proceed.

In the next place you promised these Two Things in the general.

- I. *That you would be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrines contrary to God's Word.*
- II. *To use both publick and private Monitions and Exhortations, as well to the Sick as to the Whole within your Cures, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given.*

*First,* That You would be ready with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrines contrary to God's Word. Concerning which Observe;

1. That the *Erroneous Doctrines* here meant, are those only, which your People (some of them at least) are already infected with; for no Errors can be banished from them, but those which they have given entertainment to.

As

As for other Errors, which they know nothing of, never so much as mention them, lest by acquainting your People therewith, you may endanger their being insnared by them. Observe,

2. That though all Erroneous Doctrines, are with *faithful diligence*, yet not all with *equal diligence* to be opposed; but as the Errors are more or less mischievous, so our Zeal against them ought in proportion to be more or less. Some Errors there are which do not touch any part of the Foundation, which have no visible tendency to an evil Life, or to the disturbance of the Peace of the Church: Others there are which oppose some Articles of our Creed, as that Christ is not the Eternal Son of God, begotten of the Father before all Worlds, &c. and which are inconsistent with Peace and Holiness. The former sort do not deserve to be opposed with so much Zeal as the later, against which we can never too earnestly contend: Of which for instance, are these; That no Man is bound to repent of his Sins till he come to die; That Christ's Righteousness is so made ours, that we need do nothing our selves in order to the obtaining of Eternal Salvation, &c.

*Secondly*, The next thing you promised, was, *To use both publick and private Monitions and Exhortations, as well to the Sick as to the Whole within your Cures, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given.*

First, *To the whole*; To use not only *publick* but *private Monitions and Exhortations, as need shall require*. And truly, my Brethren, there is commonly but too great need of this: For the Reproofs and Exhortations we use in publick, being not directed to this or that Person in particular, but to all in common, who are guilty of the Sin reproved, or of the Neglect of the Duty exhorted to: They who are concerned, do commonly find some way to shift them off from themselves; but when you address to each Sinner in particular, and plainly tell him, that

that *he is the Man*, who lives in the practice of this or that known Sin, &c. he can then find no way to make his Escape.

And here, my Brethren, I beseech you, not to be strangers to your People; but as you have leisure and opportunity, to go to their Houses, and acquaint your selves familiarly with them, that you may the better know, what their particular Tempers and Inclinations are, what are the Prejudices they lie under, what the Temptations they are most obnoxious to, and may accordingly apply your selves to them. By one hours familiar Discourse with them in private, you may work more good upon them, than by many Sermons in publick. Publick Preaching has, I grant, this great Advantage, that therein you speak to many, and by consequence may do good to many at once; but an Application to a Sinner in private, is usually much more effectual, as to him in particular.

To satisfy you, that this is your Duty, I need not tell you, that St. Paul taught not only publicly, but *from house to house*: That Night and Day he ceased not (as he had opportunity) to warn *every Man*; not all collectively, but every one apart, as the Words in the original import; That he exhorted and comforted, and charged *every one*. It will be enough to tell you, That to *re-buke a sinning Brother*, and to *exhort one another*, are the bounden Duties even of private Christians, and therefore much more of those, who by their Office are to watch over Souls, and to give an Account to God for them: But suppose this were not made your Duty antecedently by God, yet you have made it so Your selves, by your voluntary Promise to perform it.

But that this weighty Work of private Instruction, Exhortation, Admonition and Reproof, may be the more successfully managed, take the most convenient seasons for it, when the Persons are the most apt to be wrought upon; and do it with that meekness and demonstration of love,  
that

Act. 20. 20, 31.

ἐν ἑκάστῳ.

1 Thes. 2. 11.

that it may plainly appear to your People, that you do it out of meer Kindness and tender Compassion to their Souls.

*Secondly*, The next thing you Vowed, was, *Faithful diligence in your Monitions and Exhortations to sick Persons*: Which is a Work of the greatest moment, in order to the engaging them to a HOLY Life, if they recover; or the preparing them for a Happy Death, if they be taken away by their sickness; and therefore requires a proportionable care in the management of it. To see a soul entring upon the other World, likely within a few hours to be in an endless state of happiness or misery inexpressible, should, methinks, make us bestir our selves, to save it from Death, before it be too late.

Do not therefore stay till you be sent for, but go to them of your own accord. Deal faithfully, and withal prudently with them about the state of their souls. If you find them grossly ignorant, instruct them (as you have opportunity) in those Truths which are absolutely necessary to be known. If they be such as have lived in any notorious sin, or whom you have great Reason to fear are meer strangers to a Holy Life, labour to awaken them, by the most moving Considerations, to a sense of their sin and danger; but let them withal know, that their Case is not so desperate, but that there is still ground of hope concerning them: Shew them the greatness of that Salvation which Christ hath purchased for them, and upon what Terms it may be still obtained by them. And though in their sickness they cannot give Proof of the sincerity of their Repentance, by resisting and overcoming those Temptations which formerly prevailed over them; yet put them upon all that which in their present circumstances they are capable of doing; upon confessing their sins, and imploring the mercy of God thro' Christ; upon patient submission to God's good pleasure; upon forgiving those from the heart who have offended them;

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and

and upon making Restitution (as far as they are able) for any Injuries they may have done to others; upon Resolutions and solemn Promises, by the assistance of God's Grace, of forsaking their former sins, and of leading a new Life, if God shall please to raise them up again. And if they recover, go to them again, and seriously mind them of the Vows they made upon their sick beds, and quicken them to the performance of them. Do not fail to let them know, that their condition will be much more deplorable, if they shall again relapse into their old sins.

In the next place, these Questions were propos'd to you, *will you be diligent in Prayers, and in reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the Knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the World and the Flesh?* To which you Answered: *I will endeavour my self so to do, the Lord being my Helper.* So that you promised by God's Help these Four Things:

- I. That you would be diligent in Prayers.
- II. That you would be diligent, in reading the Holy Scriptures.
- III. In such studies as would help to the Knowledge of the same. And therefore,
- IV. That you would lay aside the study of the World and the Flesh.

First, *That you would be diligent in Prayers.* That is, both in publick and private Prayers.

I. *In publick Prayers.* Which we ought more especially to attend to, since GOD is much more honoured by our publick Addresses to him, than he can be by those which are made to him in private; and because we our selves may expect a greater Blessing from those Prayers which are put up to God by many joyntly, than from those which are put up by our single selves. As there-

therefore anciently a Morning and Evening Sacrifice was every day publickly offer'd up to God in the Temple at *Jerusalem*; so I heartily recommend it to you, my Brethren, That in all your Parishes, where a Congregation (though but a small one) can be got together, you would every day have Morning and Evening Prayer in your Churches. And that you read the Prayers not *partially*, but *entirely*; and with such seriousness as becomes them, as may invite all piously-disposed People to them, and quicken their Devotion when they are at them. I know not how any Minister can dispense with himself in this matter, or what *Salvo* he can have for his Conscience, who does otherwise. But though publick Prayers be the more excellent; yet,

2. This cannot excuse you from being *diligent in private Prayers*; and that both for your People, and for your selves.

*First*, Pray much and earnestly for your People: Of this *St. Paul* hath set us an Example, as he himself testifies in his Epistles; thus he prayed for the *Colossians*, *That they might be filled with the Knowledge of the will of God, in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding, that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.* Thus he pray'd for the *Ephesians*, *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, would give unto them, the spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened; that they might know what is the hope of his Calling, &c.* That God would grant them according to the riches of his Glory, to be strengthen'd with all might, by his spirit in the inner Man; that Christ might dwell in their hearts by Faith, &c. Thus he tells the *Romans*, *That without ceasing he made mention of them always in his Prayers.* In like manner he prayed for the *Philippians*; *Always (says he) and in every Prayer of mine for you all, making request with joy.* He thought it not enough to pray once or twice,

Colos. 1. 9.  
10, 11.

Ephes. 1. 15,  
16, 17, 18.

Ephes. 3. 16,  
17, 18, 19.

Rom. 1. 9.

Phil. 1. 4.



but he ceased not still to pray for them. It cannot be thought, that any Pastor, who aims, as he ought, at the salvation of his People, can forbear to pray for them.

*Secondly*, Pray constantly and earnestly for your selves. For such assistances of God's holy Spirit, as may enable you rightly to discharge the Duties of your holy Calling. *We are not sufficient of our selves, to think any thing as of our selves, but all our sufficiency is of God.* We made our Ordination Vow in expectation of, and dependance upon Gods help. *I will do so by the help of the Lord; I will, the Lord being my helper.* And we need not doubt of God's help, if we sincerely and importunately pray for it; for he hath promised *his Holy Spirit to them that ask it*; That is, all the Gifts of his Holy Spirit, we stand in need of. But to proceed:

2. You promised, *To be diligent in reading the Holy Scriptures.* And,

3. *In such studies as help to the knowledge of the same.* I put them both together for brevities sake.

*1 Tim. 4. 13.* St. Paul commanded *Timothy, to give attendance to reading, viz. of the Holy Scriptures*; and that not only in publick to others, but also in private; that he himself might be the more thoroughly instructed in them. And if this was needful for *Timothy*, who had learn'd the Holy Scriptures from a Child, it will I fear, be much more needful for many of us. The Scriptures were inspired by God to this very end, That the *man of God* (that is the Minister of the Gospel) *might be thoroughly furnished to all good works.* That he might be instructed in every part of the Duty which belongs to his Office; whether it be to teach, or to reprove, or to correct, or to instruct in righteousness. Out of this sacred repository, and this only, we may be supplied with whatsoever is necessary for us and our People, to know, and to believe, and to do.



I therefore earnestly press you to the study of the Holy Scriptures day and night ; to get such parts of them by heart, as may be of most frequent and necessary use, that you may have them in readiness upon all occasions. And in your reading of them, to observe those places which are most obscure, to compare them with the Originals, and with the words coherent ; to consult some one or more of the best Commentators upon them, that you may attain to the true sense of them. And for those who have leisure and ability for it to read the Fathers, at least, of the three first Centuries ; the History and Antiquities of the Church ; the *Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Roman and Jewish* Antiquities ; and such other parts of Learning, without which many places of Scripture cannot be well understood. And that you may be thus diligent in Prayer, and in reading and studying the Holy Scriptures.

*Fourthly*, You promised *To lay aside the study of the World and the Flesh*. For the more you study the World, the less will you study the Holy Scriptures ; the more you consult the ease and pleasure of the Flesh, the less will you attend to the pleasing of God, and the saving of Souls. In what degree soever your affections are set upon the things on the Earth, in that they will necessarily be taken off from the things above. O remember, That every Clergy-man is a *man of God*, dedicated to him in a more eminent service than others are ; and that you rob God of all that time and study, which are needlessly spent upon other matters. Remember, that you are obliged, not only by your Baptismal Vow, to renounce the World and the Flesh, as Lay Christians also are ; but more closely bound to it than they, by this solemn Vow you made at your Ordination. Let it appear to all Men, that you pay your Vows by your living above this World, and having your Conversation in Heaven.

In the next place you promised these two things:

This part of the Ordination-Vow was made the Subject of the whole Charge at another place; and therefore is here the more briefly spoken to.

- I. *That You would be diligent to frame and fashion your own selves and your Families, according to the Doctrine of Christ. And which is somewhat more,*
- II. *To make both your selves and them, as much as in you lyeth, wholesome Examples and Patterns to the Flock of Christ.*

*First*, You promised to be diligent, *To frame your own selves according to the Doctrine of Christ*; to have your Conversation in all things suitable to the Gospel you preach. He can never be seriously concerned for other mens souls, who has not first a care of his own; nor make it his chief study to conduct others in *the narrow way that leads to Life*, who walks himself in *the broad way that leads to destruction*. But suppose he could sincerely endeavour to destroy that sin in others which he cherishes in himself; yet what success can he in reason expect? Can it be thought that his People should pay any regard to what he says, when they see that he does not regard it himself? Can they think, that he does in good earnest believe what he preaches, when he unpreaches the same again in his life? And is it then likely, that they should believe it, especially when it thwarts their beloved Lusts?

But if there should be any among us, whom this Consideration does not affect; yet methinks it should awaken them to consider, That a vicious Preacher, is in a much more miserable and deplorable Condition, than a vicious Hearer; because his sins are much more aggravated, and consequently, his Punishment will be proportionably more intollerable. Thou that teachest another Man should not be drunk, if thou art a Drunkard; Thou that preachest another should not be covetous, or proud, or contentious, if thou art so thy self, thy own Sermons will rise up in Judgment against thee; out of thy own Mouth shalt thou be

be condemned to that utter darkness thou hast warned others to make their escape from ; and shalt have the darkest and most dismal Portion in it. But this is not all : For,

2. That measure of Grace and Holiness which may suffice for a Lay man , will not be enough for those who are to be their Guides. You cannot go to Heaven at so cheap a rate, as your People can ; as your Calling is more holy, and stands in a nearer Relation to God, so also must your Lives be. You must be Patterns of all those Graces and Vertues you recommend to them ; that they by looking upon you, may be able to discern wherein they are defective. *In all things shewing thy self a Pattern of good Works*, says St. Paul to Titus ; which he also gives in charge to Timothy, *Be thou an Example to the Believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity*. Which Commands, though given to those who were of the higher, yet are in proportion applicable to those of the lower Order of the Clergy : For as Bishops ought to be Examples to the inferiour Clergy, so the inferiour Clergy ought to be Examples to the Laity.

Tit. 2. 7.

1 Tim. 4. 12.

It is indeed the Duty of all, even the most vulgar Christians, if compared with the men of the World, to be Patterns to them ; so our Saviour tells his Disciples, That they were to be *the salt of the Earth, and the light of the world* ; and commands them to *let their light so shine before men, that others seeing their good works, might glorifie their Father which is in Heaven*. What then is required of you, my Brethren, who ought to be Examples to them, who are to be Examples to the rest of Mankind ? *what manner of Persons ought you to be, in all holy Conversation and Godliness ?*

Mat. 5. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Nor must we only endeavour to frame our selves, but our Families too, according to the Doctrine of Christ ; and to make them Examples to other Families ; to make our Children and Servants, as much as in us lyeth, Examples to those of others, in all those Graces and Duties, which

which are proper to those Relations: Which must be done by more fully instructing them in their respective Duties, and by frequently pressing their Duties upon them by such Considerations, as may be of power to over-awe their Consciences, and oblige them to the performance thereof; and by hearty Prayers to God, to make our endeavours this way successful.

There is one thing more in your Ordination-Vow, which I shall but very briefly recommend to your Consideration and Practice; and that is, *That you will maintain and set forward as much as lieth in you, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian-People; especially among them who are, or shall be committed to your Charge.*

As to make peace, not only between God and Man, but also between man and man, was one great thing our blessed Saviour had in his eye, when he came into the World; so, in order thereunto, he hath enjoined the Practice of all those Vertues, which tend to the begetting and promoting of Peace, and hath forbidden all those ill-natur'd qualities, that are Enemies to it. As he hath commanded, *If it be possible, as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men:* So he hath pressed us with great variety of the most powerful Arguments, *to be at peace among our selves.* So much was Peace his Design, that he is stiled the P R I N C E of Peace, and his Gospel is called, the Gospel of Peace. As therefore we are the Ambassadors of this Prince of Peace, and intrusted with the dispensation of his Gospel of Peace, we are above all other men in the World, obliged, to the utmost of our power, to prevent or reconcile differences; and to maintain and promote Peace among our People.

To that end, go to them that you hear are at variance, endeavour to remove their Prejudices, to correct their Mistakes, to allay their Passions, to perswade them to mutual Condescension; and by all other fair means to make them heartily Friends: Ever remembering, *That, Blessed are*

are the Peace-makers for they shall be called the Children of God. Mat. 5. 9.

To the last part of your Ordination-Vow, (*viz. That you will reverently obey your Ordinary, and other chief Ministers, to whom is committed the Charge and Government over you, &c.*) I shall say nothing, but leave it to your own Consciences to comment upon it, presuming you will be impartial therein, and less favourable to your selves than I should be.

There is one thing still behind, that I must give you in Charge, and that is, The strict observation of the Canon against clandestine Marriages. I hope those who practice contrary to it, are in comparison but few, (notwithstanding the many Complaints which have been made to me about it) That they are no other than the idle, loose and vagrant; that is, the Scum and Refuse of the Clergy, who drive on this scandalous Trade: For I cannot persuade my self, That any Man who has not very much debauch'd his Conscience, and lost all sense of Honour and Reputation, can be easily prevailed with to make such Marriages, considering how express and severe the Laws of our Church are against them; and considering the many sins and mischiefs which are the usual Consequents of them.

Can. 62.

I shall pass over those which are of a more general extent, and only mention a few of those Ecclesiastical Constitutions, which more particularly relate to our own Church.

In a Council conven'd at *Westminster* in the Year 1175, it was Ordain'd, That if any Priest shall be found to have joyned any in Marriage clandestinely, he shall be suspended from his Office for the space of Three Years.

In a Council held after this, in the Church of *St. Pauls* in *London* in the Year 1328, it was decreed, That all Priests who shall presume to be present at any Matrimonial Contracts, before the solemn publication of Banns,

Lynw. l. 4.  
Tit. 3. c. 1.

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shall

shall be suspended from their Office for three Years. And that every Priest, whether Secular or Regular, who shall without the special leave of the Diocesan, presume to Celebrate Marriage in any place but a Church or Chappell, which hath Parochial Rights, shall be suspended a whole Year *ab Officio*.

Lynw. l. 4.  
Tit. 3. c. 2.

In another Council held at St. Pauls London, in the Year 1342, it was decreed, That all Priests who shall presume to be present at any clandestine Marriages, shall *ipso facto* incur the Sentence of Excommunication; and shall be publicly denounced four times every year. Which Decrees are still in force, by the Statute of the 25<sup>th</sup>. of Hen. 8. C. 19.

But we need not look so far back; one would think, it might be sufficient, to consider the 62<sup>d</sup>. Canon, made in the Convocation in the year 1603. In which every Minister upon pain of Suspension for three years *ipso facto*, is prohibited to Celebrate Matrimony between any Persons without a License, except the Banns of Matrimony have been first publish'd three severall Sundays or Holy-days, in the Parish Churches or Chappels, where the said Parties dwell. And is also upon the like Penalty prohibited, under any pretence whatsoever, to joyn any Persons so licensed, in Marriage, at any time but between the hours of 8 and 12 in the Morning; or in any place, but in the said Churches or Chappels where one of them dwelleth. It is not enough barely to have a Licence, if the Circumstances of *Time* and *Place* be not duly observed, you incur the Penalty of three years Suspension.

And as our Church hath set such a strict Fence about Marriages, so there was great Reason she should be so severe in punishing those that break thorough it; considering those enormous Sins, and those intolerable Mischiefs, which are the usual Attendants and Consequents of Clandestine Marriages.

One too common effect of such Marriages, is the Sin  
of

of Incest, in joyning those Persons in Matrimony who are within the Degrees prohibited. In one of those Ecclesiastical Laws, I have now recited, this is mention'd as the Reason of it. A Proof of which (as I am inform'd) you have lately had, in Two Incestuous Clandestine Marriages made in this Diocefs.

Another Sin usually attendant on these Marriages, is the violating the Rights of Parents, and contempt of their Authority. Nor do they only deprive Parents of the Duty of their Children, but in effect of their Children themselves; which is one of the worst sort of Thefts, and deserves a much more severe Punishment, than many other Thefts, which are by our Laws punished with Death.

The Dishonour they reflect upon our Church, and our Holy Profession, is intollerable; so much hath the Reputation of the Clergy been thereby lessen'd, that it hath been moved more than once, in the great Council of the Nation, that this Work might be taken out of their hands, and intrusted to others, who might be more faithful in the Execution of it.

How mischievous these Marriages commonly prove to the Parties so Married, and to their Children after them; how fatal they often are to considerable Families, even to the ruine of them; and consequently, What Mischiefs do hence redound to the Publick, I need not tell you. I forbear to proceed to other particulars, because these already mention'd, will, I hope, be sufficient, to deter every man from this scandalous Practice, who hath not sinn'd away all Conscience and Shame.

What remains, but that I charge the Church wardens under Pain of Perjury, to present all those Ministers, whom they either know, or have been credibly inform'd have been this way guilty. And if the Church-wardens shall neglect their Duty, I beseech you, my Brethren, to take care, that they may be some way or other presented;  
that



that I may take care to see them punished according to Law. And if any Ministers shall after this Admonition given them, proceed to make such Marriages, as thinking their Danger will be past, as soon as the Visitation shall be over, I shall not fail, upon Information given me, to execute the Canon in its rigour against them.

To Conclude.

Let us now, my Brethren, seriously reflect upon what hath been spoken. Let us consider the Trust committed to us, the Vows that are upon us, the Account we must shortly give to the Almighty, All-seeing and Impartial Judge; the dreadful Woe we shall incur, if we be false to our Trust; the Glorious Reward we shall have, if we be faithful. For your Peoples sake, if you desire to save them: For your own sakes, if you desire to save yourselves, and would not be condemned to a more intolerable Hell, than the worst of your People shall be condemned to: For God's sake, if you have any regard to his Commands; For Jesus's sake, if you have any Love for him, *Feed his Flock which he hath purchased with his own Blood; feed them, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready mind. Be instant in season, and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and patience: Make full proof of your Ministry; That so when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you may receive a Crown of Glory, which fadeth not away.*

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F I N I S.









